

IV. DECENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The 2000 – 2005 Consolidated Plan housing needs assessment focuses on three problems: affordability, overcrowding, and substandard units. These are the very same issues unresolved in other cities throughout the Nation. Much of the information used to develop the needs assessment is identified in the City's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (**CHAS**). The Consolidated Plan adopted seven housing goals acknowledged in the CHAS to address housing problems. They are as follows:

- To maintain and improve the quality of the existing housing stock
- To increase opportunities for low-income households to live in affordable housing
- To protect and preserve housing units currently affordable to low-income households
- To provide increased opportunities for home ownership
- To address the special needs of the homeless and potentially homeless
- To insure fair treatment and equal opportunity for all households in the housing market
- To provide opportunities to expand the housing stock through new construction.

The CAPER provides information on programs and activities that address the priorities listed above. These goals are addressed through activities funded by CDBG, ESG, and HOME. The following provides information regarding the City's activities related to housing. These programs primarily focused on rehabilitation of existing properties to preserve affordable housing. Detailed expenditure information is listed in the financial section of this report.

Fair Housing

The City of Long Beach has a contract with The Fair Housing Foundation of Long Beach, Inc., a California nonprofit corporation, for the purpose of providing programs and services toward the elimination of illegal discrimination in housing and the elimination of impediments to fair housing choice.

The purpose of the FHF program is to affirmatively further fair housing by providing information, education, counseling and investigative services. These services are offered to all Long Beach residents without discrimination. FHF emphasizes the following: (1) Testing and investigation of complaints alleging housing discrimination; (2) Audits of housing practices; (3) Education and outreach services; (4) Landlord tenant counseling and other referral services; (5) Tester and other volunteer training; and, (6) Promoting media interest in eliminating housing violations.

Section IV – Affordable Housing

For the reporting period of October 1, 2002, through September 30, 2003, Fair Housing Foundation provided the following services to Long Beach residents to affirmatively further fair housing:

- Served 3,674 clients:
 - ◆ 42% Caucasians, 32% African Americans, 15% Latinos, 3% Asian/Pacific Islanders, 8% Other
 - ◆ 21% non-low income, 62% low income, 17% very low income
- 161 discrimination complaints were investigated
- 3,673 landlord-tenant complaints were investigated
- 2,485 complaints were mediated
- 1,178 other services provided to support housing complaints

In addition to Fair Housing Foundation services, many of the clients received additional services through: the Health Department, Housing Authority, County Assessor, Consumer Affairs, Code Enforcement, Legal Aid of Long Beach, Small Claims Court, and HUD.

In Long Beach the most common impediments to fair housing choice are race and familial status. FHF uses a diverse pool of skilled testers to investigate complaints. When an investigation is complete each client is advised of the findings and available options. Referrals are made to the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for complaints regarding lending discrimination, the Department of Justice (DOJ) for class action cases, the State Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH), Small Claims Court and a Private Attorney. FHF follows the desires of the complainant and mediates the situation if requested to do so by the complainant. Legal training seminars are available to property owners as an educational means of resolving cases.

Lead Based Paint Reduction

A Federal rule was introduced to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 24 CFR 35.105, which requires federally funded housing rehabilitation projects to test for lead hazards. The City of Long Beach has identified protocols to implement this regulation. These protocols are: Notification, Lead Hazard Evaluation, Lead Hazard Reduction, Ongoing Maintenance, Response to Children with Environmental Intervention Blood Lead Levels. Staff from the Department of Community Development are working in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services to provide the testing, containment and/or abatement of the lead paint surfaces. In addition to the lead-based paint outreach, the City of Long Beach continues to implement its current policy of notifying property owners, tenants and contractors of potential lead hazards for all rehabilitation projects involving pre-1978 properties.

This is accomplished by providing educational information to the public, coordination with the City agencies rehabilitating targeted high-risk affordable housing, investigation and early response to families of lead-poisoned children, enforcement of applicable laws, and response to community complaints. The following are responsibilities of the Lead Reduction Program:

Childhood Lead Poisoning Investigation and Outreach

- Investigation of lead-poisoned children
- Enforcement of environmental ordinances
- Preventive outreach/education with families of lead-burdened children

HUD-Funded Grant Program

- HUD funds are used, when available, to control lead-based paint hazards in pre-1940 affordable housing occupied by families with children aged 5 or younger in targeted high-risk areas of the City.
- Housing that has been made lead-safe by HUD lead grant funding or other means is entered in the [Lead-Safe Housing Directory](http://wmirror.ci.long-beach.ca.us:8000/health/lead_safe_registry.html), which can be found on the web at: http://wmirror.ci.long-beach.ca.us:8000/health/lead_safe_registry.html

Community Complaint Response, Education, and Outreach

- Information/referral to lead-related questions provided to the public
- Site investigation performed as needed
- Group presentations
- Educational materials provided to Long Beach residents

Services to Other Departments

- Special lead inspection/sample testing as part of the Planning and Building Department sandblasting permit process
- Lead inspection/risk assessment on City property and equipment, e.g. playground equipment, on request
- Lead paint inspection, project design, monitoring, and final clearance testing services for other City housing programs, on request.

Affordable Housing

Funding from CDBG, ESG and HOME were used to target affordable housing needs through various activities, including: low-cost, low-interest residential rehabilitation loans, financial assistance to Community Housing Development Organizations, tenant based rental assistance, and housing administration. The majority of funds are targeted to provide rehabilitation of residential properties.

During the 2002 - 2003 program year HOME provided assistance to 370 multi-family units and 60 single-family units with rehabilitation loans. All of the projects focused on improving living conditions, while the multi-unit projects also maintained affordable rents.

Under federal regulations a minimum of 15% of HOME funding must be allocated to Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO's) for housing development activities. CHDO organizations must be private, non-profit, community-based service organizations, which have obtained or intend to obtain staff with the capacity to develop affordable housing for the community served. Since the inception of HOME in 1992 the City has worked with six CHDO's:

- Decro Corporation
- Long Beach Affordable Housing Coalition
- Mental Health Association
- Shelter for the Homeless
- United Cambodian Community, Incorporated
- Federation of Filipino American Associations, Incorporated

First-time Home Buyer Programs

The City uses HOME and Redevelopment Housing Set Aside funding to assist first-time homebuyers. During 2002 - 2003 program year 29 low/moderate income homebuyers were assisted.

Marketing

The City has continued a concentrated rehabilitation marketing effort in the ten Neighborhood Improvement Strategy Areas, Anaheim and Santa Fe Street corridors (see attached maps). This effort includes mailing information to every owner and tenant of residential property within the areas and providing materials at community meetings. All of the City's residential rehabilitation marketing, information and application materials have been translated into both Spanish and Khmer.

All recipients of HOME loans for multi-family rental projects must agree, in writing, to affirmatively market rehabilitated units for the applicable affordability period. This affirmative marketing condition is incorporated into the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions and Agreement to Comply with HUD Regulations. Both documents are recorded against the property and stipulate that violations will result in default, making the loan immediately due and payable. Default conditions specifically include illegal discrimination covered under Federal and State fair housing statutes, discrimination against recipients of publicly assisted housing funds, and discrimination against families with children. All project owners are required to list vacant units with the Long Beach Housing Authority (LBHA) and the private non-profit Fair Housing Foundation of Long Beach, Inc. (FHF). The LBHA and FHF are required to inform City staff of any violations of the owners' responsibilities relative to affirmative marketing of vacant units. The FHF and LBHA will make lists of HOME funded vacant units available to home seekers and address issues relating to violations of the owner's written affirmative marketing agreements.

In all materials marketing housing programs the City emphasizes its position as an equal opportunity lender and includes both the approved HUD logo and a written statement to that effect.

City staff regularly solicits Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women Business Enterprises (WBE) interested in providing services to HOME-funded activities. Contractors selected to provide housing services during the reporting period were WBE firms. City staff participates in the City's annual MBE/WBE conference to encourage greater utilization of MBE/WBE firms by both the City and private businesses. A copy of the latest MBE/WBE report provided to HUD is included in the Other Reports section.

Neighborhood Partnership Projects – Community Gardens



City of Long Beach



2002 – 2003 CAPER